AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The present listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the subject patent application.

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of managing CAD data in a plurality of disparate and diverse databases comprising:

providing a first database located in a first location and further being located behind a first firewall;

providing a second database located in a second location and further being located behind a second firewall;

providing a clearinghouse server located outside of said first firewall and said second firewall, said clearinghouse server having a clearinghouse database comprising an index to at least a portion of said CAD data in said first database and at least a portion of said CAD data in said second database;

providing a workstation located behind said first firewall, said workstation having a clearinghouse interface program;

establishing communications between said clearinghouse interface program with said clearinghouse server;

transmitting a request for a requested file from said clearinghouse interface program to said clearinghouse server;

determining that said requested file is located in said second database by using said clearinghouse database;

sending a request from said clearinghouse server to said second database for said requested file;

converting said requested file to a first transmittable format without content change of said requested file; and

transmitting said requested file from said second database in said first transmittable format.

Claim 2 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said workstation is a CAD workstation and said clearinghouse interface program is a plug-in application.

Claim 3 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said establishing communications between said clearinghouse interface program and said

clearinghouse server comprises authenticating and authorizing said clearinghouse interface program.

Claim 4 (previously presented): The method of claim 1 further comprising:

converting said requested file from said first transmittable format to a first CAD format;

translating said requested file from said first CAD format to a second CAD format;

converting said requested file from said first CAD format to a second transmittable format;

transmitting said requested file to said first CAD station using said second transmittable format; and

converting said requested file from said second transmittable format to said second CAD format.

Claim 5 (original): The method of claim 4 wherein said step of translating said requested file from said first CAD format to said second CAD format is performed by said clearinghouse server.

Claim 6 (original): The method of claim 1 wherein said first transmittable format comprises XML.

Claim 7 (currently amended): A system for sharing files across disparate databases comprising:

a first server located behind a first firewall and connected to a first database that contains a first set of files;

a second server located behind a second firewall and connected to a second database that contains a second set of files;

a clearinghouse server located outside of said first firewall and said second firewall;

a clearinghouse database located on said clearinghouse server and having an index to at least a portion of said first set of files in said first database and at least a portion of said second set of files in said second database;

a workstation located behind said first firewall and having a clearinghouse interface program capable of interfacing with said clearinghouse database on said

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clearinghouse server, said clearinghouse interface program further capable of sending a request for a specific file indexed in said clearinghouse database;

said clearinghouse server further receives said request for said specific file from said workstation, determines that said specific file is located on said second database, and sends said request for said specific file to said second server; and

said second server further receives said request for said specific file, locates said specific file in said second database, converts said specific file into a first transmittable format <u>without content change of said specific file</u>, and sends said specific file.

Claim 8 (original): The system of claim 7 wherein said first database contains files in a first CAD format and said second database contains files in a second CAD format.

Claim 9 (original): The system of claim 8 wherein said clearinghouse server is further adapted to:

receive said specific file;

convert said specific file from said first transmittable format to said second CAD format;

translate said specific file from said second CAD format to said first CAD format;

convert said specific file from said first CAD format into a second transmittable format; and

transmit said specific file to said workstation.

Claim 10 (original): The system of claim 7 wherein said clearinghouse interface program comprises a plug-in application.

Claim 11 (original): The system of claim 7 wherein said transmittable format comprises XML.